

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4546,
BOB STUMP NATIONAL DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FIS-
CAL YEAR 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise reluctantly today on the Conference Committee report for the Fiscal Year 2003 Defense Authorization.

The House of Representatives sent to the Conference concurrent receipt provisions that were a solution to the problem of the nearly 15 million veterans and their families in this Nation. Last night, after 40 minutes of debate, the House adopted a version of the report that will aid merely 33,500 of our military retirees who suffer from a combat-related disability.

While I appreciate Chairman HUNTER's efforts to keep some language in the conference report, I am left to wonder: what have we done for the other 14,966,500 servicemen and women who have stood behind this great Nation?

We had the support and votes of over 400 Members of this House and funding in this year's budget to solve this seemingly unsolvable problem. When are we going to put our money where our mouths are?

Adding insult to injury, the concurrent receipt provisions are confusing and complicated. Deserving or not, approved or not, claimants will inundate the Department of Defense, causing further delays and postponements in an already backlogged system. We may very well end up losing more Federal dollars in a drawn-out claims process than will reach our retirees in payments due to these vague eligibility provisions.

I have the greatest respect for BOB STUMP, for whom this legislation is appropriately named. He has been a tireless advocate for America's Uniformed Services, and an invaluable mentor to me. And while this is a first step on the road to improved compensation for our veterans, I was unable to sign this conference report. We have just sent a message to the men and women that defend our freedoms that I cannot support. That message is this: 20 years or more of honorable military service is enough to warrant receipt of military retirement pay only if you are injured in combat.

Mr. Speaker, we must pledge now to provide for the welfare of veterans who have contributed in every capacity to the defense of our Nation.

The remainder of this legislation is a cumulative statement on how this Congress views its armed forces. Our vote sends a clear message to our men and women in uniform that we support your efforts and appreciate your sacrifice to defend this great Nation.

Of the total \$355.1 billion, \$93.6 billion (\$11.5 billion over fiscal year 2002) supports the budget request for 1.4 million active duty and 864,558 guard and reserve personnel; it fully funds the pay raise of 4.1 percent and adds \$110 million over the budget for enhanced force structure for B-52 squadrons, and Guard and Reserve full time support personnel.

The Navy, of particular interest to Northwest Florida, will receive \$3.2 billion for 46 Navy F/

A-18 E/F fighters, including an additional \$120 million over the budget request for 2 additional aircraft. The appropriation will also provide \$4.0 billion for 23 F-22 fighters and \$3.5 billion for continued development of the multi-service Joint Strike Fighter.

Defense health programs are funded at \$14.8 billion with \$7.7 billion going towards Tricare for Life, post-65 military retirement medical care.

Additionally, I am happy to see \$26 million for the Joint Primary Aircraft Training System or JPATS. JPATS brings Naval aviation training into the 21st century by providing student aviators with glass cockpits and ejection seats, a more realistic training, for a more realistic age of war fighting.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is progressive, reflective of Congress and goes a long way in supporting our men and women in uniform.

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SPEECH OF

HON. HOWARD. P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Mr. McKEON Mr. Speaker, I would like to first thank House Armed Services Committee Chairman BOB STUMP for whom this bill is named. It has been a great privilege to serve on the committee with Chairman STUMP. He has served his country with distinction in a number of capacities. From the time he concealed his age to be eligible to join the fight during World War II to his patriotic leadership in the HASC, Chairman STUMP had exemplified bravery, integrity and honor. Truly, he has been a role model for all Americans.

Post September 11, Americans are painfully aware of the need to equip our military with not only the tools, but also the training vital to securing and preserving freedom at home and abroad. I strongly support H.R. 4546 because this bill is an aggressive plan to provide our men and women in uniform with the best in both training and equipment.

Furthermore, H.R. 4546 honors those who protect our freedoms each day. It is unfair and unpatriotic to ask the men and women of the armed services to perform one of the most difficult and more important jobs without compensating them fairly. I am extremely pleased that the defense reauthorization act includes a 4.1 percent military pay raise.

This legislation marks a critical point for the United States in the war on terror. For over a decade the U.S. military has suffered the blows of defense budget cuts. I support H.R. 4546, which including the President's goal to increase funding and to repair the damage caused by these cutbacks.

IN HONOR OF ZLAKET FAMILY
BUSINESS

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Zlaket Family of Garden Grove for 75 years of service to their community.

In 1927, Leo and Mary Zlaket decided to open a general store, selling bulk items to farm housewives, like flour and sugar, as well as fabric to sew clothes for their families. Chickens were sold whole, without the modern day pre-packaging.

Today, the Zlaket market caters to the fast-paced and busy community of Garden Grove by selling specialty and gourmet items. However, they still maintain their old world charm by selling "Moms Cakes" baked by 81-year-old mom Kay Roman, who wakes up early each morning to bake her delicious creations.

I am very proud of the Zlaket family for sustaining a business over 75 years through events like World War II and the Great Depression. Their dedication to their community, their business, and their family is to be commended.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOUGLAS H.
DITTRICK

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate an outstanding member of our community and northern New Jersey—Douglas H. Dittrick, who on November 18, 2002, will be honored by the Northern New Jersey Council of the Boy Scouts of America as one of 2002's "Good Scouts." I am privileged to know Doug as a constituent, a counselor, and, most important, a valued friend.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to list all of the contributions Doug has made to New Jersey as a businessman, as a civic leader, and as a philanthropist. Doug is an outstanding example of the type of person who makes Bergen County, our State, and our Nation such a wonderful place.

As President and CEO of Douglas Communications Corporation II, Doug has been a leader and pioneer in the telecommunications industry for more than twenty-five years. He has served as Chairman of the National Cable Television Association, and has been honored as Executive of the Year by Cable Television Business magazine. Doug is a recipient of the NCTA's Vanguard Award for outstanding contribution to cable television, and has been a champion of the telecommunications industry for decades.

Equally important, Doug has been a leader in innumerable charities and civic institutions within and outside of New Jersey. In my own district, he has chaired the Valley Health System and served as chairman of the board of the Valley Hospital's Board of Trustees. He has been actively involved in the leadership of the American and National Red Cross on both the state and national level. In my hometown